



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **VENEMAN ANNOUNCES \$6.3 MILLION IN RURAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS TO FOSTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN 20 STATES**

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19, 2003 – Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced this week \$6.3 million in economic development grants in 20 states.

“The Bush Administration is committed to enhancing job opportunities in America’s rural economies,” said Veneman. “These grants will strengthen rural community cooperatives, which will facilitate the retention of jobs in rural areas.”

Recipient states and the grant amounts are the following:

<b>Alabama</b> - \$321,104	<b>Arkansas</b> - \$325,253	<b>California</b> - \$327,748
<b>Colorado</b> - \$324,500	<b>Iowa</b> - \$272,382	<b>Illinois</b> - \$209,992
<b>Indiana</b> - \$175,000	<b>Kentucky</b> - \$314,575	<b>Massachusetts</b> - \$324,811
<b>Minnesota</b> - \$347,372	<b>Missouri</b> - \$624,400	<b>Mississippi</b> - \$324,240
<b>Montana</b> - \$186,015	<b>North Dakota</b> - \$325,000	<b>Nebraska</b> - \$328,826
<b>Ohio</b> - \$346,258	<b>Texas</b> - \$294,260	<b>Virginia</b> - \$349,800
<b>Washington</b> - \$285,282	<b>Wisconsin</b> - \$325,000	

The cooperative development grant program is administered through USDA Rural Development. The grants were awarded on a competitive basis and are intended to foster rural cooperative development. The Nebraska Cooperative Development Center in Lincoln, will utilize the \$328,826 grant to provide education and technical assistance in areas of business startup, marketing and managing, and value-added production. Producers desiring to start a cooperative or related type of group venture along with those value-added cooperatives already in operation will benefit from the grant funds.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at [www.rurdev.usda.gov](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov).

